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# THE VILLAGE EUCHARIST

## *PRACTICAL NOTES*

BY

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WITH A PREFACE BY

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*Of the Community of the Resurrection*

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## PREFACE

IT gives me great pleasure to commend this book to Church people. It was my privilege to be in the chair when the substance of this book was delivered as a lecture to about seventy priests at Cambridge, of various schools of thought and mostly from country parishes. It touched me very much to see the rapt attention, bursting into enthusiastic gratitude, with which the lecture was received. It was evident that the country clergy felt that at last they had found a practical teacher who was not only a master of his subject, but also knew how to convey his convictions and conclusions to others with humility and sympathy.

The book deals with the three fundamentals of religion—God, the universe, and man—at their meeting-place in the mystic moment of the Holy Eucharist, in which the vision of God is unveiled, His life bestowed, the material universe is uplifted on to the spiritual plane, and man fulfils his destiny in worship. For the purpose for which man was created is to transmute physical energy into spiritual values. It deals with these ultimate

mysteries with reverence, sympathy, and a right judgement.

One other merit I must notice. At a time when we are weary of controversy Mr. Nottage has given us a book which is practical and constructive. That is what the Church needs more than anything else. The negative way, the demonstration of the invalidity or irregularity of some other person's Orders and Sacraments, may expose error ; but it seldom wins to the truth. But the Blessed Sacrament verifies itself to every spiritual person. It wins without wounding. Only round the altar will Christendom be re-united. Mr. Nottage's book shows how the Holy Eucharist may become the central act of worship in every village church. It is full of constructive teaching given with a tenderness, simplicity, and enthusiasm which admirably reproduces the tone of the Gospel.

I hope this book will bring new courage and inspiration to many a village priest who has lost the spring of his first enthusiasm. Religion matures best in our villages, where men see God in His works, and learn to be patient. Dr. Durnford, when Bishop of Chichester, once said to me, ' Do not be discouraged if it takes a long time to get anything into the heads of our dear people.

It will take centuries to get it out !' In so far as we have failed in the past is it not because we have neglected to make the one Gospel Service the centre of our people's worship ? I am convinced that the teaching in this book will inspire many to reorganize their parochial work and worship round its true centre in the Blessed Sacrament.

PAUL B. BULL, C.R.

HOUSE OF THE RESURRECTION, MIRFIELD.

*Conversion of S. Paul, 1930.*



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# THE VILLAGE EUCHARIST

## I

### HOW TO PREACH ABOUT THE EUCHARIST<sup>1</sup>

LET me say at the outset that my experience, except for two very blessed years at S. Bartholomew's, Ipswich, has been almost entirely that of a parish priest of two small and obscure Suffolk villages : what I say, therefore, will probably apply mainly to rural work. But I incline to think that misunderstanding and ignorance of the Church's Eucharistic life and teaching is not less widespread among town dwellers, nor the neglect of this Sacrament less serious ; though the eclectic character of our town congregations sometimes produces a sense of false security.

If we are to seek to commend Eucharistic doctrine and life in our preaching, our starting-point must be the inquiry—What do the people at present think about the Eucharist ? By 'the

<sup>1</sup> A Paper read before a Conference of Priests at Cambridge, October, 1929.

people' I mean nominal Church people, un instructed and mostly unconverted.

Certain ideas which held the field a generation or two ago are undoubtedly vanishing, but still in certain places have to be reckoned with. Among such I include these three :

- i. That 'staying to Communion' is only for the educated, the upper classes, and the aged ;
- ii. That to go to early Communion is a High Church eccentricity ;
- iii. The idea that going to Communion pleases the parson, and will secure a material return from the charities of his household.

These ideas are all but dead, and their condition witnesses to the progress which, under God, has been already achieved towards right thinking about the Eucharist. Other ideas, however, are widespread, the correction of which requires all our tact and persuasiveness, and a large measure of patience—but correct them we must.

The outsider and the nominal Churchman are still profoundly convinced that, in the religion of the Established Church, Holy Communion is an extra ; and we ourselves are apt to lend colour to this idea, unconsciously, when we classify our adherents as 'Church people' and 'communi cants' respectively : a truer division would be 'non-practising Church people' and 'practising Church people.'

The old-fashioned Churchman, whose Communions, if infrequent, mean much to him, is

usually possessed of two false ideas, which are apt to make progress slow and difficult ; they are these :

i. That to be present at the Holy Communion Service without receiving the Sacrament is abnormal, and is in fact merely 'looking on'—a phrase I have often heard ;

ii. That to exalt the Mass at the expense of Morning Prayer is new-fangled and a fad of the parish priest.

Lastly, there is a persistent idea which I venture to describe as the most baffling of all the misconceptions with which we have to contend : as things are, a parish priest cannot place the Eucharist supreme in the scheme of Sunday worship without being labelled 'High' or 'Anglo-Catholic,' and accordingly suspected. My own feeling is, that there can be no more urgent problem in that part of our work which concerns the training of the people in the ways of worship, than the problem of how to discredit this notion. To be regarded as a party-man means the delimitation (in the villages) both of our appeal and of the confidence reposed in us even by those whom our appeal reaches

Let me pass on, without further preliminaries, to the positive teaching about the Eucharist that we shall set ourselves to give. We know our objective, but let us make no mistake about the right motive for aiming at that objective. We

press the claims of the Mass, not because to give it first place is 'correct,' or Catholic, or even primitive, these are secondary: but because of the divine promises attaching to it—because it is the paramount means by which the soul may make contact with our Lord.

Thus, for example, in preaching on the Sunday obligation, we shall do well to say little about the 'law' or even 'custom' of the Church, and much about our Lord's invitation and desire, our own truest wisdom, and the spiritual advantages of a ruled life. It is a risky thing to base too much of our teaching on 'the law of the Church': to define 'the Church' in this connotation is not easy—to define its 'law' is, for us in the Church of England, wellnigh impossible.

So I think that in our Eucharistic teaching we can hardly too often hark back to the Institution, and to the discourse on the Bread of Life in S. John vi. Only we shall give to the Institution and to S. John vi their proper setting—as being involved in the life and work of Jesus as vitally as are the Sermon on the Mount, and the Miracles, and the Passion and Resurrection. Harm may be done—harm not improbably has been done—by taking the Eucharist out of its context in the work of Christ, and parallel to this, by giving it a wrong proportion and a false isolation—representing it almost as an end rather than as a means—in the life of the Christian. Though they may find it difficult to express their criticism, I believe

that people are very quick to discern any kind of false emphasis, and they are not likely to take kindly to teaching which appears to divorce the Eucharist either from the rest of the Gospel or from the total content of that elementary spiritual life of the individual which they dimly understand.

We speak of 'the materialism of the present age.' Do you not agree with me that materialism has been the besetting temptation of every age? It could hardly be otherwise, so completely are we conditioned by material things. And is not the whole task of religion to bear witness to the reality of the spiritual—only just out of sight, underlying the material, permeating it? If we can show that all life is sacramental, that our own life is a stewardship of the material as a vehicle of the spiritual, we shall in fact do the greatest of the works of religion.

And our Eucharistic teaching must be of a piece with this general interpretation of life. While on the one hand a diligent use of the Sacraments is a constant reminder of the reality of the spiritual world, and the subservience of the material world to it, on the other hand a preacher whose message is penetrated with this view of life will preach no Sacrament or system of Sacraments in splendid isolation, but will commend them as what would be *a priori* expected in the method of a spiritual religion. In nature God bestows the inward and spiritual by the means of what is outward and

visible, and in grace the self-same Hand bestows His gifts in the self-same way.

Let us, however, cherish no delusions. No matter how simple the vocabulary that we use, all such ideas as these will be quite foreign to the bulk of the people ; at first they will not penetrate at all—then they will appear fantastic and imaginative. Mark this—that we need have no fear of repetition : indeed, repetition in one form or another is the only way into the recesses of their untrained perceptions. The country labourer, we are told, can only be approached on the intellectual side by repetition. You are at pains to be deliberate, explicit, and very persuasive ; he says ‘ Eh ? ’—and you think your pains are wasted. You repeat your proposition, in the same terms or with a variant, and he says ‘ Oh ! ’—with dawning perception. Again you have your say, to receive the answer ‘ Ah ! ’—and you know that he has, at least, laid hold. Then your task becomes this—to see that he does not lose his grasp of the new truth ; but that is an easier task.

Continuous teaching is upon this principle necessary, if we are seriously minded that people shall learn to understand and practise the Church’s Eucharistic life. In the ‘ instruction stage ’ (and in our parishes does this stage ever cease ?) spasmodic references to the Eucharist are of little value. A sermon or two a year, standing alone in a setting of sermons on general subjects, will not commend the practice of attending the Lord’s

Own Service. In years gone by we used to invite six of our neighbours in the deanery each to give a Wednesday evening preaching from our pulpit during Lent. It may have served some useful purpose then—and I am quite sure that ‘they had their reward’ ; but in these comprehensive days I fear the result, if any, might be chaotic : in any case the earnest pleading of Father X for a general return to the altar would miss its mark, sandwiched between the pious generalities of Mr. A or Canon B, and the neo-liberal theories of Doctor C or Dean D. It would miss its mark because it stood alone—because it could not be an insistent pleading—because he had to leave his hearers muttering ‘Eh ?’ without the opportunity of rousing them to ‘Oh !’ still less of driving it home to ‘Ah !’

You will have guessed that I am suggesting the preaching of courses of sermons—but the courses which I commend are something other than the courses we knew last generation. Serials are popular to-day, in the daily paper and magazine, and in the picture house—but not in the pulpit. I fear we parsons are deficient in the art of juggling with sub-titles ! Do not tell them it is a ‘course,’ or gloom will settle down on them and they will be listless, or rebellious against a not very sporting attempt to dragoon them into regular attendance at church for a given number of Sundays. And if you do not tell them that it is a course it will be needless to publish that the sub-

ject has reference to the Eucharist, thereby inviting the criticism that I have heard levelled at the vicar in more than one country village, 'We want more Gospel and less Holy Communion.'

I have ventured to set down here several short courses, all bearing upon or leading up to aspects of Eucharistic doctrine. Other, and better, courses will suggest themselves to you—but these at any rate possess the one merit of having been used. In every case, there are but three sermons in the course—my experience is that the connecting links may not survive longer ; and also that criticism is disarmed (and, incidentally, our Eucharistic appeal strengthened) if our congregation, coming to church on a fourth Sunday, hears a sermon not directly connected with the group just given—possibly of a non-sacramental or of a mission character.

In a short paper it is impossible to do more than suggest subjects for the courses and for the sermons belonging to this course. I hardly think this is a disadvantage ; give him his subject, and every man can best do justice to it in his own way.

## I. GOD'S SACRAMENTAL PLAN

- i. The sacramental principle in created things.
- ii. The sacramental principle in the Incarnation.
- iii. The same principle at work in the Eucharist.

I want to say that I know no better simple homely illustrations of the sacramental principle at work in the everyday things of human life than those used by the great missioner who, to the sorrow of us all, has recently left us—I refer of course to Father Vernon : vegetable life known to us through plants, animal life through animal bodies, etc. ; confidence through the handshake of friend and friend, love through the kiss of man and wife, forgiveness when two little children have quarrelled and make it up, and give each other a sticky sweet.

## II. 'EMMANUEL, GOD WITH US'

- i. God's contacts in the Old Testament, e.g. Burning Bush, Ark, Shekinah, leading up to the Incarnation.
- ii. The contacts of God Incarnate in the New Testament ; miracles, etc.
- iii. The contacts extended in the Sacraments.

## III. GRACE

- i. Man's double life—body and soul—needing double nourishment.
- ii. Sanctifying grace—its working and effects.
- iii. Sacramental grace—supplying to the outward man by outward means spiritual food for his spiritual self.

**IV THIS OUR SACRIFICE<sup>1</sup>**

- i. Sacrifices of heathen and Old Testament (the principle of sacrifice).
- ii. Sacrifice of Calvary—‘made’ once and for all.
- iii. Sacrifice of Eucharist—the self-same Sacrifice, being the only possible ‘perfect’ sacrifice, can be ‘ever’ presented.

**V. THE HOLY COMMUNION**

- i. Old Testament—Sacrifice and Feast.
- ii. Communion not an act complete, but the completing of an act.
- iii. Broad instruction on devotion at Mass—
  - (a) if ‘hearing,’
  - (b) if communicating.

**VI. THE LORD’S SUPPER**

- i. Remote preparation of S. John vi.
- ii. Immediate preparation of solemn Passover meal.
- iii. The Gift and S. Paul’s teaching about it in 1 Corinthians xi.

<sup>1</sup> For this course, see Father Vernon’s *Notes on the Catholic Religion*, Lecture II, part 2.

## VII. EUCHARISTIC TEACHING OF THE PRAYER BOOK

- i. The Catechism.
- ii. The words of the Communion Service.
- iii. The rubrics of Communion Service.

## VIII. THE COMPLETE COMMUNICANT

- i. How to prepare.
- ii. How to use the service.
- iii. How to give thanks.

## IX. THE BLESSINGS OF COMMUNION

- i. Sermon on 'She touched the hem of His garment.'
- ii. Sermon on 'I am come that they might have life . . . more abundantly.'
- iii. Blessings of Communion to 'such as do stand,' 'the weak-hearted,' 'them that fall'; Holy Communion and final perseverance.

## X. WHEN GO TO MASS ?

- i. The Lord's Service on the Lord's Day.
- ii. Great days, ecclesiastical and personal.
- iii. The sick man's Communion.

## XI. MASS AND OTHER SERVICES

- i. Old Testament—Synagogue and Temple.
- ii. Choir Offices and the Eucharist.

- iii. Teaching of Prayer Book about the place of the Mass.

## XII. THE FAMILY GATHERING

- i. Sermon on the Christian family.
- ii. Sermon on the children's Saviour.
- iii. Eucharist essentially social, hence has universal appeal.

## XIII. THE COMMUNION SERVICE

- i. History, in broad outline.
- ii. Structure.
- iii. Detailed explanation of the traditional 'people's parts.'

## XIV. WHAT MEAN YE . . . ?

- i. How your church is arranged, and why.
- ii. Ceremonies of the ministers.
- iii. Pious acts commended to the people for their use

## XV. THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

- i. 'Jesus is here with us'—How? What we may infer from New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For this sermon, see Father Vernon's *Notes on the Catholic Religion*, Lecture II, part 1.

ii. Reservation—normal (as well as historical) outcome of the Gift.

iii. The communicant's treasure and responsibility.

I further suggest that some of the well-known Eucharistic hymns form an admirable basis for an address—especially to a guild, if such exist in a parish. They are packed with instruction and have the advantage of being often known by heart ; and as they are sung in the services, the instructions associated with them may be recalled. You cannot make adults memorize salient points as you can children ; but here we have the salient points already fixed in the memory. Such hymns as 'And now, O Father,' 'Once, only once,' 'Now my tongue the mystery telling,' 'The Heavenly Word proceeding forth,' will readily occur to you ; a most useful instruction, or even a series of instructions, can be built round any of these.<sup>1</sup>

A practical inquiry that will suggest itself is, When shall these courses be given ? It may be noted that in several of them only one of the three sermons is definitely on the Eucharist, though prepared for by the other two. Consequently I do not think it too much to have six or seven such courses in a year ; perhaps two in Lent, one in

<sup>1</sup> An example of how this may be done is found in Father Vernon's *Notes on the Catholic Religion*, at the end of Lecture II.

Advent, one on the latter Sundays after Easter (with a view to the approaching feast of Corpus Christi, where this is observed). If your Sunday programme is Mass and Evening Prayer, it is probably well normally to use the Gospels for preaching at Mass ; but even so, about four times a year some definitely Eucharistic discourse should be given, on the principle of answering the question, 'What mean ye by this service ?' But if you are so circumstanced that at present your principal services are Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, I suggest strongly that as much and as frequent Eucharistic teaching should be given to the morning congregation as to those who come in the evening.

In all our teaching, and above all in our preaching about the Holy Eucharist, I am sure that we may take as our golden rule, following the example of our Lord Himself, 'Teach them as they are able to receive it.'

1. Do not expect—do not try—to press the Eucharistic ideas or practice of all the people into one mould : if you do, you court disappointment in the issue ; and, further, it is so very easy to go beyond what, as ministering in the Church of England, we have any right officially to insist upon.

It is our wisdom to remember the essentially Catholic character of the Eucharistic teaching of our own formularies ; if you are ever inclined to doubt their adequacy, ask yourself this question,

‘What if all Church people lived up to the bare Prayer Book ideals?’ There would, I think you will agree, be little for us to complain of or to worry about then.

Supplementary devotional helps can be given to individual souls whom we personally guide, if we are convinced of the need: but it is surely better to use to the full what we possess, rather than to fret after non-essentials that are no part of our heritage.

2. Our objective—and the objective, I should expect, of many generations to come—is to lead people to be *regular, not infrequent, expectant* communicants—not exponents of Eucharistic theology, still less partisans of any theological school. Get them to make this contact with Christ, and they will learn by experience. In religion the only sure method is the heuristic, ‘If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.’ And as they learn more, so they will seek more:

Qui Te gustant, esuriunt,  
Qui bibunt adhuc sitiunt,  
Desiderare nesciunt  
Nisi Jesum quem cupiunt.

The discerning priest will not improbably guess their seeking, and will set himself to teach them, ‘here a little, there a little,’ as they are able to bear it; but I know that always the Blessed Sacrament will be like unto treasure hid in a field

—once found and realized as precious, then till life is over there must be for joy thereof the selling of all that we have—the toilsome detachment from the small, the mean, and the partial, that the greatest may be ours, and the treasure yield up its secret.

Some part of what one feels bound to say on this subject of preaching about the Eucharist, tends to assume the shape of a series of warnings ; and if I give them to you as such, may I first say that I do so very humbly—and that they are derived from some little experience as a hearer, a preacher, and a gossip from cottage to cottage ?

1. Earliest among these warnings I would place this—that we must avoid like the plague, in our work in small and isolated villages, the condition of settled gloom, expecting but few to come to Mass or to communicate. We shall *have* but few—but we must always live quite expecting more. If we lose freshness and expectancy, for more than a month or two at a time perhaps (when we are ‘out of sorts’)—in this or in any other part of our parish work—well, then we had better move heaven and earth to get fresh work, for assuredly a longer stay can only harm both the parish and ourselves.

Four remedies, at any rate, are at the disposal of all of us, to cope with this depression :

Ordered intercession for the parish.

Frequent approach to the altar.

Our own retreat.

Short but frequent courses, ever seeking to present Eucharistic truth refreshingly.

2. We must remember that the simplest theological or devotional phrases may be meaningless to minds in which they find no point of contact ; the language of spiritual things is to most as foreign as French or German. Such phrases we readily employ in our preaching—‘pleading the Sacrifice,’ ‘the intercession of our Lord,’ etc. Use simple words, simple lines of thought, *labour* to be understood ; it is not our message, but His ; we are His only messengers in a little village ; loyalty demands that we get His message through.

3. I think we have to face another hard fact : that a priest going into the average rural parish, minded to teach and to practise a religion of sacramental grace, does in fact mean—to the people—a change of religion. Our task is to graft the sacramental on to that barely supernatural religion they already know of ; and we shall use care to mend the old garment with old cloth—to use every shred of Eucharistic devotion that we anywhere discover in the place, not being extreme to mark shortcomings in its expression.

Let me for a little follow out this thought.

It is, I am bold to say, inexcusable to refuse to give Communion at late Mass ; and unwise to over-stress fasting Communion, in dealing for instance with old and middle-aged persons who have been brought up to communicate late ; the man

who does so will in any case fail to achieve his purpose—either they will not fast or they will not come to their Communion at all.

Again, if one finds, on going to a fresh parish, that a hymn has been sung, badly, by an exiguous congregation, at early celebrations of the Eucharist, it is infinitely more worth while that one should work to improve and increase the singers (enduring tortures, if need be, meantime) than that one should knock off the custom with an impatient criticism that it savours of Victorian High Churchism.

4. In all our preaching, a primary need is circumspection—indeed in every public or semi-public utterance of the parish priest need of this characteristic can hardly be over-stressed. But in our preaching about this Sacrament, we need especially to speak with circumspection on two matters :

(i) On the Sunday obligation. People are so ready sincerely to interpret (or rather to parody) our teaching as being in effect : 'Go to Mass, then do what you like all the rest of the day.' Always we must be careful to insist that they who love our Lord and are grateful to Him, and value their Communions, will *want* to be in the house of God again during the day.

(ii) Care, too, is needed in our preaching about the benefits of Communion, lest they should interpret us to mean that it works like a charm. I have heard villagers assert that their vicar teaches

that any one who receives Communion is bound to be saved ! We need to dwell with much care upon the duty of a right disposition, a sincere motive, adequate preparation and thanksgiving. And we shall not go far wrong if we are by way of reminding the people what the world has a right to look for in the life and conduct of a communicant. We shall not get more communicants—still less, better communicants—by cheapening this Holy Mystery.

5. The point I am now going to make may not be very necessary in speaking to the present audience ; if it were not, in my view, of importance in the interests of completeness, I would almost apologize for speaking of it at all. It is this—that we must avoid exaggerated and Italian phrases. It is very easy to put people's backs up—to wound the susceptibilities of Christians far better than ourselves, who have grown up seeing the truth from a view-point different from our own ; and it is so very hard to regain their confidence.

So far, however, from being needful to avoid it, I think there may be a positive value in the use, from time to time, of the word Mass—if so be that we make it our business now and again to explain it and to show its authority.

In preaching, and in giving out notices, it is valuable to use as many titles as possible for the Eucharist, and we could do worse than preach sermons from time to time on The Titles of the

Lord's Own Service. This helps to make clear, in the course of our common practice, the truth that under all its aspects the Christian Sacrifice is one and the same thing : 'When the Pope celebrates pontifical Mass in S. Peter's at Rome, he is administering the Lord's Supper ; and when in the barest village church the unvested priest at an unlighted Communion table administers the Lord's Supper, he is offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.'

But avoid, above all, such a phrase as 'The Prisoner of the Tabernacle' ; and if you wisely teach your people little simple prayers, teach them to say, not—

Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore,  
but rather—

Jesu, our Lord, we Thee adore.

6. The method favoured in some quarters not so long ago, of always 'working in a sacramental finish' to a sermon, is worse than useless. It exasperates some, amuses others, and brings forth fruit in no single soul. Again, it has the very effect that we most desire to avoid, of making the Sacraments appear as addenda to ordinary Christianity.

7. Hidden away in even the most unpromising village there are at least one or two souls to whom the wonder and the sweetness of the Holy Sacrament are no mere empty verbiage ; probably their devotion will be incoherent ; if they seek to

express their belief and experience, it will be in terms strange to our ears, and seemingly inadequate—perhaps irreverent. It is so important not to put these off ; they will be, if we have the skill and wisdom to use them aright, our surest allies—our first seed-plot, where soil is ready prepared for our sowing.

In the dark days of more than a century ago, there was in Yorkshire an old farmer who had, in addition to his family, many of the unmarried farm hands living under his roof. The Blessed Sacrament in those days was administered once a quarter! On the Saturday night before this Sunday, four times a year, it was this farmer's custom to assemble in the great kitchen of his house his family and all the farm workers who lived with him ; and he was wont to speak to them to this effect : ' To-morrow is Sacrament Sunday ; it is for each of you to decide for himself whether or not you will receive the Holy Communion—but I have called you together to let you know that, when our Saviour comes to His house, I insist that every one living in my house shall be at the Service to welcome Him.'

It is well often to employ phrases familiar to these old-fashioned communicants (phrases, by the way, which are by no means absent from Roman Catholic books) that they, at least, may not think that we teach some new thing :

‘ The Communion table.’

‘ Meeting the Saviour at His table.’

‘Partaking’ — a lovely social word.

‘The Holy Bread—the Holy Cup.’

‘The Feast of Remembrance’ — leading them on gradually to the idea of remembrance in the sight of God, as well as subjective remembrance.

8. What need of patience there is, and of persuasiveness, with those whom unuttered and unformulated motives of reverence keep away from the celebration of the Eucharist. Let the invitation to ‘join us in the service, even if you do not partake of the Sacrament,’ be of the warmest and most gracious ; let the figure of our Blessed Lord as the Master of the Feast be made very real, and His invitation and His desire. It is true of these, as of children, that if we can get them into the habit of coming to Mass, approach to the Communion-rail will be no longer barred from them ; as on the physical side they will lose shyness, so on the spiritual side in time they will experience an attraction ; and not infrequently, when sickness or bereavement comes to such, the habit of Communion (prepared for by attendance at Mass perhaps for years) is begun.

9. Owing to a sort of warped reverence easily mistaken for churlishness, village people are apt to resent the presence of children, however well behaved, at the Holy Communion Service. They rationalize their objection by saying that the children do not ‘understand’ ; a statement easily met, of course, but the obvious reply does not satisfy. I venture to think, that only by patient

teaching of the social character of the Eucharist can their discontent be finally set at rest. Old Testament allusions, the finding of Jesus in the Temple, the children in the Temple on Palm Sunday, will readily occur as parallels for preaching. We shall aim at producing such a 'family feeling' that a Mass without some children present shall be regarded as an incomplete thing.

A picture may be ruined by the frame in which it is exhibited—or its beauty may be enhanced ; a jewel needs to be seen in its proper setting : and so important is this same principle in regard to our presentation of Eucharistic truth, that I do not feel guilty of transgressing the limits of my subject in touching upon the setting of our preaching—our church arrangements, our round of services, our music and ceremonial. If we were Roman Catholics, the frame would be already there, and our task would be to paint the picture within its limits ; as Anglicans we have a double task—to paint the picture, and to construct and adorn the frame. A harder task, but infinitely more intriguing.

Two things by way of preliminary : it is the picture that matters, the frame is subservient ; this is not to say that the frame does not matter, but that it matters intensely that the frame should be unobtrusive. Secondly, a simple wooden frame, well proportioned and well moulded, is better than the most ornate and heavily-gilded mon-

strosity ; of its kind let our setting be of the very best, not elaborate, not expensive, but good.

One is from time to time asked to advise on a well-worn question by an incumbent-designate : ' Shall I put on " everything " at once, or shall I make no change in externals till I have thoroughly taught the people ? ' The answer, as so often, lies between the two extremes ; it is both unfair and suicidal to impose upon people a ceremonial which is outlandish, meaningless, and therefore insincere, from their point of view ; but, on the other hand, every psychologist—nay, every little ex-pupil teacher in our elementary school—will tell us that instruction should be imparted by ' doing ' side by side with ' hearing.' He would be an optimist indeed who should imagine that a village Parochial Church Council, after a lustrum or even a decade of teaching, is likely to approach the incumbent and request the adoption of the *Ornaments of the Church* and of the *Ministers* as by rubric required !

A neglected altar and an untidy sanctuary ; a church unused from Monday morning till Saturday evening ; a priest known never to go to the altar except at the weekly Communion Service ; a morning service so arranged that ninety-five per cent of the people leave the church before the Eucharist begins—these will give the lie to the most eloquent preaching and to our most persuasive appeals.

I believe that from every point of view—from a propagandist as much as from any other—the considerations in favour of a daily celebration of the Eucharist are overwhelming. The very fact that so few people attend it will in time (if we are not silent upon the subject in the pulpit) force the attention of Church people upon its objective and intercessory character. By simple instruction upon what we (but not necessarily they) call intention, we can link on their everyday life, their anxieties, their joys, their bereavements and sicknesses, to the worship of heaven and earth ; we can promise, in a talk when we visit them, to say Mass for them in this or that need or emergency ; we can suggest their attendance on a birthday, or an anniversary, or when a young person is starting out from home for new work, and so on—always being ready to adjust the hour of the service to their convenience ; and even on days when no one from the parish is present, the bell sounding across the village will not be wholly unnoticed.

Often I am told that in this or that village it is impossible to have a daily Mass, because there is nobody to attend. I think that this is almost always an overstatement. Have all possibilities been explored ? has the priest attempted to make a rota of six persons from the village ? Failing that, could not the day's tasks be so arranged that there is one person from his own household, relative or servant, free each day at Mass time ? Or is there not at least a little boy of fairly good conduct who

would come each morning to the rectory to clean boots, and then go on to serve—receiving a little payment and perchance breakfast for his boot cleaning, the serving being represented as a privilege? I believe that, before now, vocations have been discovered by this means; I at least know a country farmer, now reaching old age, who has been for fifty years the mainstay of a tiny Catholic outpost in East Anglia—entirely as a result of what he learnt as stable-boy to a pioneer Catholic rector of two generations ago.

May I briefly make a few suggestions under this heading, of the 'setting of our Eucharistic preaching'?

1. The daily Mass.
2. Let it be known that the priest can always be found in church, to sign papers, etc., at the end of the Mass each morning; and let the waiting parishioner see him make his short thanksgiving first.
3. Where it is adopted by the local authority, use the scheme permitted by the Board of Education, of withdrawing children from school for the divinity period 'to receive instruction elsewhere than on the school premises,' either on Holy Days or once a week, and give them a Mass, inviting mothers to come as well; thus your instructions to the children will be put into practice immediately.
4. Use the opportunity now open to us, as a result of the permissions accorded by the

bishops, to shorten Morning Prayer, if it be in possession of the field ; not robbing it of its music, but going straight on with the Eucharist—and taking care to keep the whole service within the limit of seventy minutes.

5. At the early Eucharist on Sundays, lead the people in a brief preparation (at the chancel step) before going to the altar, and a brief thanksgiving before retiring to the sacristy.

6. Provide, weekly or monthly, for instance on Fridays, a Mass for the aged or infirm late in the morning, with a simple five minutes' talk to give them an intention.

7. See that the altar and Communion linen is spotless ; the brass bright (and in the country this means have as little brass as possible ; if you have inherited by ill-fortune a host of brass vases, keep them stored at the rectory, and use them only for harvest thanksgivings, replacing them with glass vases from Woolworths) ; never allow a decaying flower near the sanctuary ; and above all, at the altar try to be very quiet, very deliberate, and very still.

My masters, I have done. There can be no greater joy to the heart of a good priest than to watch some few of the souls committed to him growing in the love of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. In the final resort, the work is not ours : ' No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him ' ; but in the

divine economy, the Eucharistic treasure is entrusted to us as God's priests, and the measure of the zeal and care with which we preach its wonders is the measure of the faithfulness of our stewardship.

## II

### HOLY COMMUNION<sup>1</sup>

#### EUCARISTIC TEACHING IN OUTLINE

##### WHAT IT IS :

It is not just a service, like any other. It is The Service in which, according to His promise, Jesus our Lord and God uses bread and wine to provide for us two things, namely :

1. A continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of His death ;

2. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by His Body and Blood (see *S. John* vi. 54, 55 ; *S. Luke* xxii. 19, 20 ; and the Prayer Book Catechism).

##### HOW IT BEGAN :

It was prepared for by our Lord, in His teaching to His followers, in *S. John* vi. 27 to the end ; and about a year later it was first celebrated by our

<sup>1</sup> This instruction was drawn up by the author for use as a broad-sheet, and was printed by hand in tabular form upon a card about three feet by one foot six inches, and displayed in the porch of a village church.

Lord in the Upper Room at Jerusalem, the night before He suffered (see *S. Matt.* xxvi; *S. Mark* xiv; *S. Luke* xxii; *1 Cor.* xi).

#### HOW THE FIRST CHRISTIANS REGARDED IT :

1. As the Christians' Sacrifice, taking the place of the old Jewish and heathen sacrifices (see *Heb.* xiii. 10).
2. As a sharing in our Lord's life (see *1 Cor.* x. 16).
3. As the great means of holding all Christians together in unity (see *1 Cor.* x. 17).
4. As the one service in attendance at which they were steadfast (see *Acts* ii. 42 and 46).
5. As their usual way of observing 'the first day of the week,' that is, Sunday (see *Acts* xx. 7).

#### HOW IT CAME TO BE NEGLECTED IN ENGLAND :

When our English Prayer Book was first drawn up (from the old Latin service books, about three hundred and seventy years ago), the bishops wished to persuade people, not to be satisfied by merely *coming* to the service, but actually to *receive* their Communion regularly and frequently, instead of never receiving except at Easter and when they were dying.

Their way was, to say : 'If there are not enough people to receive the Holy Sacrament, there is to be no Communion Service on that day.'

But, instead of this causing people to receive

their Communion more often, it had the opposite result ; for Sunday after Sunday and month after month there were not enough people wishing to receive Holy Communion, to make a service under these new rules possible ; and in a generation or two the people had practically forgotten about the Lord's Own Service (because they so seldom saw it), and had put the *human* service of Morning Prayer in the place of the *divine* service of Holy Communion.

#### WHAT OUR CHURCH OF ENGLAND REALLY MEANS US TO DO ABOUT IT :

To make it the *big* service to which *every one* comes *every* Sunday ; we can see this for ourselves, because the Holy Communion is the *only* service in the Prayer Book at which—

A *sermon* is ordered ;

*Notices* are ordered ;

A *collection* is ordered ;

A special exhortation is ordered if people *neglect* to come to it ;

Special arrangements are ordered for a *visiting bishop* ;

The service is printed in the *middle* of the book, after the mediaeval arrangement of Missals, so that these pages, being most used, should not easily become loose, as they would if printed near the beginning or end of the book.

All these facts show that it was expected to be the *big* service to which *every one* would come.

### HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE COME TO IT ?

*Every Sunday alike*, for it is the Lord's Own Service for the Lord's Own People on the Lord's Own Day.

You should make all your arrangements for Sunday fit in with this first duty to your *God*. He gives you one hundred and sixty-eight hours in the week, can you not spare Him *one* ?

Only illness, old age, or looking after a sick person or a baby, should keep you away ; *not* cooking a meal or tidying the house, such things can wait.

Bring baby to God's house as soon as you begin taking him to other friends' houses.

### HOW OFTEN SHOULD I ACTUALLY MAKE MY COMMUNION (THAT IS, ' RECEIVE ') ?

As often as you feel the need of our Lord's help, to keep you living a life like His ; for He says, ' Him that cometh to Me I will *in no wise* cast out.'

### WHAT DO WE GAIN BY COMING ?

We join our own poor prayers with the One Perfect Sacrifice made by Jesus on Calvary, and presented to God the Father by the worshippers at every Communion Service.

If we *receive* at the service, we also gain nourishment (from Christ's own life) for our souls, to help us meet temptations, bear trials, enjoy our pleasures better, and do our work.

**HOW SHOULD I PREPARE TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION ?**

1. Kneel down, and *pray* the 'Our Father' and the Collect of Whitsunday.
2. Go carefully through the questions in your Communion book. (A paper of questions for self-examination can be had from the rector, free.)
3. Own up to God the sins, in talk, or thought, or deed, or slackness, that you have discovered.
4. *Pray* the prayer 'We do not presume' out of the Communion Service.

**HOW SHOULD I GIVE THANKS AFTER RECEIVING ?**

1. Do not hurry out of church (unless you must).
2. Kneel and say carefully, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord,' etc., and the Collect of the Sixth Sunday after Trinity ; then the 'Our Father.'
3. Remember your Communion now and then during the day as you go about, and say quietly, 'Glory be to the Father,' etc.
4. If time allows on Sunday, come to Evening Prayer in church.

**WHAT IS THE BEST TIME FOR HOLY COMMUNION ?**

1. Early in the day before its work and worries begin.

2. Early enough to give plenty of time for the morning's necessary work after the service, so that you are not worried about it during the service.

3. Early enough to enable all who wish to make the Holy Food the first food of the day.

4. If on a Sunday, late enough to enable you to have an extra hour in bed. In short, about 9 a.m. on Sundays.

#### SHOULD UNCONFIRMED CHILDREN COME ?

Yes, because our Lord says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me.'

1. By regular coming they grow accustomed to the service, and so are prepared for the time when they may receive the Sacrament.

2. In the Baptism Service, the godparents are ordered to see that the child 'hears sermons'; but the only service at which the Prayer Book provides a sermon is the Holy Communion; so that clearly it was intended that this was the service to which the children were to be brought.

#### SOME NAMES OF THIS SERVICE :

*The Holy Communion*—which means 'holy fellowship,' because it is the service in which we all meet round the Father's table as brothers and sisters in His great family.

*The Lord's Supper*—because He feeds our souls.

*The Eucharist*—which means 'thanksgiving,'

because in it we thankfully commemorate the atoning death of our Lord.

*The Holy Sacrifice*—because we on earth offer and present to God in heaven the Perfect Sacrifice which Jesus made on Calvary.

*The Lord's Own Service*—because, of all Church services, it is the *only* one which our Lord Himself ordered.

*The Mass*—the short, convenient, old English name, a name used all over the world, in one form or another, for this service.

#### HOW TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF THE SERVICE :

Before you come, each time settle in your mind—

Something you want to *thank* God for, and something you want to *ask* God for. Remember these specially during the silence after the Consecration Prayer.

#### WHY HOLY COMMUNION IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER :

Because the two beautiful services of Matins and Evensong (or Morning and Evening Prayer) were invented by Christian men (monks) three hundred to four hundred years after our Lord's Ascension, but the Holy Communion was invented and ordered by the Son of God Himself (see *S. Luke* xxi. 19, 20)

**HOW TO BE TRUE TO OUR MASTER IN OUR WORSHIP :**

By obeying the loving command He gave to His people the night before He suffered, ' Do this [Holy Communion] in remembrance of Me.'

**HOW TO BE FALSE TO OUR MASTER IN OUR WORSHIP :**

By coming more or less regularly to the services made by human beings (Morning and Evening Prayer), and seldom or never coming to our Master's Own Service of Holy Communion, but treating it as an ' extra.'

**WHY LIGHTS ARE USED AT HOLY COMMUNION :**

Illuminations are a sign of rejoicing, and we rejoice at this service, for it is the Feast of the Great King.

**WHY VESTMENTS ARE USED AT HOLY COMMUNION :**

Because they are like the garments that our Lord Himself wore, and they have been the uniform of His ministers at this service ever since.

**WHY WAFERS ARE USED FOR HOLY COMMUNION :**

Because they are the *purest* bread, in the most *convenient* form, least likely to drop *crumbs* or to become *stale*.

**WHY INCENSE IS SOMETIMES USED AT HOLY COMMUNION :**

As an 'object lesson,' to remind us that, as the sound of our prayers and hymns rises up mingled with the smoke of the incense, so all our prayers, our worship, and our offerings are not *in themselves* good enough, but can only reach Almighty God when they are offered with the merits of the atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ : 'Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight, O Lord, as the incense.'

**WHY HOLY COMMUNION IS CELEBRATED ON WEEKDAYS AS WELL AS ON SUNDAYS :**

So that a few people who can make time—if only one each day—can come and join in the offering of our Lord's Sacrifice on behalf of all the busy workers, and the sick, and those at sea, etc., who cannot come themselves. To attend a weekday Mass is one of the most *unselfish* acts of a Christian.

### III

## FROM THE PORCH OF A VILLAGE CHURCH

THESE brief papers were prepared as 'Information Sheets,' and were displayed in the porch of a village church. They led to quite a number of inquiries on the part of parishioners, giving to the priest an invaluable opportunity of individual instruction. As there is of necessity a good deal of Eucharistic teaching embodied in the papers, the whole set is given here. Parish priests may care to copy them on sheets and use them for their original purpose, adapting and improving them in accordance with local circumstances.

### OUR MORNING SERVICE

Many churches have Morning Prayer as the chief Sunday morning service ; we have the Holy Communion, or Mass, as the chief Sunday morning service.

*Why are we different ?*

We have the Communion Service instead of Morning Prayer as the chief service—

i. Because it is the *only* service our Lord Him-

self told us to have ; ‘ do this in Remembrance of Me.’

2. Because the Christians nearest our Lord’s own lifetime always kept Sunday by attending this service (‘ the Breaking of Bread ’), not any other service (*Acts* ii. 42 ; xx. 7).

3. Because very nearly over the whole Christian world to-day (in France, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Greece, Italy, Central Africa, Belgium, Armenia, etc.) *this* service is the chief service on Sundays. There are millions more Christians who go to this service than who go to Morning Prayer.

4. Because in this service our Lord comes *specially near* to us, under signs of bread and wine ; and we ‘ show forth the Lord’s death ’ at our service on earth, just as He shows it forth to God the Father in heaven (*1 Cor.* xi. 26 ; *Heb.* vii. 25 ; viii. 1 ; ix. 24).

5. Because this ancient church was originally built to be the place in which Holy Communion should be offered as the chief service every Sunday at least.

#### WHAT’S IN A NAME ?

(This is to explain two words you may often hear in this church.)

##### I. *Anglo-Catholic.*

‘ Anglo ’ means ‘ English.’ ‘ Catholic ’ means ‘ world-wide and for all time.’

We call ourselves 'Catholics' because our religion is the full religion taught by Jesus in the Gospels, and believed in and used by the first Christians in the Acts of the Apostles.

We are, however, '*Anglo-Catholics*,' not '*Roman Catholics*,' because ours is the old English religion (as it was even before this church was built), and we do not admit that the Pope is our head.

## II. *Mass.*

This is the name that we usually give to the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion—

1. Because it is the old English name.
2. Because it was the name used long before this church was built.
3. Because we claim that ours is a *true* Sacrament, so we have as much right to use the word as Roman Catholics have.
4. Because it is a short, simple word, and not too sacred for ordinary conversation.

## WHAT IS THE CATHOLIC RELIGION, IN A NUTSHELL ?

### *Love.*

God *made* us—to love Him.

God *loved* us—and died for us.

God *loves* us now—and offers us grace.

('Grace' means God's help to live well; to get it we must (1) speak to God—in prayer; (2) touch our Lord—in Sacraments).

*Joy.*

God *forgives*—when we confess with sorrow.

God *feeds*—with His own Body and Blood.

God *promises*—‘ I go to prepare a place for you.’

God *comforts*—He tells that our dead are alive with Him.

God *cheers*—for He wants our lives to be full of happiness and fun and laughter and bright worship.

*Peace.*

God *helps*—when temptation is very strong.

God *knows*—all our troubles, for He has been through this life before us.

God *waits*—and only longs for our love ; He will never shut the door in our face while we live.

God *cares*—for the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

God *never changes* :

We become hard—He is always kind.

We become careless—‘ He careth for you.’

We neglect Him—He never forgets us.

We get to know Him on earth in the Holy Sacrament ; and in heaven we shall not feel Him to be a stranger.

**WHAT ARE SACRAMENTS ?**

In the beginning ‘ God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good ’ (*Gen. i. 31*).

And when God the Son, our Lord Jesus, made His Church, He took some of those good things that He had made, and used them to carry great blessings to us :

In Holy Baptism, *water* carries new birth, as God's child, to the soul.

In Holy Communion, *bread and wine* carry the life of Jesus, God and Man, to us.

In Confirmation, the *laying on of hands* carries the strength of the Holy Spirit to help us.

In Absolution, the *words of pardon* carry God's forgiveness to one who has sinned and is heart-broken.

In Holy Marriage, the *joining of hands* carries grace to live faithfully.

In Holy Order, the *laying on of hands* carries authority to minister to Christ's people in holy things.

In Holy Unction, the *anointing with oil* carries forgiveness, strength to face death, and, if it be God's will, renewed health.

### WHAT IS WORSHIP ?

It is *giving our best* to God, in return for all He does for us.

When we worship, we must—  
give Him our *minds*—think what we are doing ;  
give Him our *hearts*—join in with love and enthusiasm ;  
give Him our *bodies*—by reverence and devout behaviour ;

give Him our *souls*—by trying to know Him and to imitate Him more closely.

Yet this is not all ; because of *sin*, our mind, heart, body, soul are spoilt, and not really fit for the good God.

So He gives us Something perfectly pure to offer—Himself in the Holy Mass.

In the Holy Mass, we offer Jesus, in His Sacrament, to God the Father—just as He offers Himself always in heaven, ‘for the sins of the whole world.’

And with that pure Offering we dare also offer our poor minds, hearts, souls, and bodies—and ask God to make the best of them.

### IS THIS CHURCH ROMAN CATHOLIC ?

No.

1. Because we do not admit that the Pope is the head of all bishops in the whole Church of God ; we say that he is just *one* bishop, equal with others ; as there are Bishops of Liverpool, London, Norwich, and many other cities, and these are all equal, so the Pope is merely the bishop of the City of Rome.

2. Because the name of the priest of this parish is not on the list of Roman Catholic priests in England, but it is on the list of the priests of the Church of England.

3. Because a Roman Catholic person would

not be allowed (if his own priest or bishop knew it) to attend a service in this church.

4. Because our public services and prayers are in English, not in Latin.

You may *look like* your brother, but you *are not* your brother ; so we may look like Roman Catholics (to some ignorant people), but we are not Roman Catholics.

## IV

### EXTERNALS

**E**XTERNALS—the arrangement of a sanctuary, the ordering of the service—are secondary ; but they have their intrinsic value, as the setting of the Eucharistic worship which we seek to commend. Hence, in a booklet that aims at practical advice, the author feels that some space should be allotted to suggestions in this direction, which are the outcome of his own experience or observation.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF CHANCEL

1. Do your utmost to clear as much space as possible in both sanctuary and choir. Often ugly front 'choir desks' are not really necessary, and can easily be moved. Only a single chair is needed in the sanctuary ; and where space is restricted, the best form of credence is a bracket on the wall—but it must be large enough to hold cruet, bread canister, and alms basin standing flat upon it.

2. Avoid such ornaments as make your church look like a Roman Catholic chapel ; they are not

in keeping with an ancient village church and are difficult to justify to an objector.

3. Avoid branch lights ; or, if they have a sentimental value to your parishioners, bring them out only for use on festivals. Two candles of beeswax or of a good 'composition' look far better than a number of paraffin wax household candles, and the extra cost is trifling ; household candles give a cheap appearance to any altar.

4. Avoid brass, because of the difficulty of keeping it bright in our damp village churches. If possible, have your altar cross and pair of candlesticks silvered, or procure a new set in wood, embellished with silver leaf. Use glass or earthenware flower vases.

5. If you must have flowers on the holy table, let them be 'sprayed' in two vases rather than tightly 'bunched' in a number. But flowers are better on the floor, on window-sills in the sanctuary, or on the chancel screen.

6. Avoid little fussy mats ; keep the missal in a vestry drawer, not on the desk, where its cover is speedily ruined ; keep also taper and matches in the vestry—not on the credence, where they look untidy ; and hide ugly Communion-rails with white houselling cloths.

7. Choir books, etc., should either be placed out of sight, or neatly arranged on their desks, on a Monday morning ; hassocks straightened, and the church generally tidied up for the week.

8. The only frontals really necessary are red (or green) for ordinary Sundays and weekdays ; a festal frontal, and a linen or dull-coloured frontal for Advent and Lent. It is not necessary to be punctilious in following an elaborate colour sequence. If vestments are used, the same three colours, together with a black set, will be sufficient.

### SERVERS AND CHOIR

1. Aim at having a server for every Mass, at least on Sundays and feast days. But do not have too many on duty at once, specially where space is limited. Even where incense is used, a thurifer and one server (with a boat-bearer, if desired) are enough. Two torch-bearers may kneel half-way down the choir, outside of the stalls, and of course facing the altar.

2. Though albs and amices form the traditional vesture for the servers in the Church of England, it is doubtful whether they can usually be adopted in a village, because it is difficult to get them to hang gracefully. A full surplice or rochet or (for the sake of convenience and neatness) a plain cotta is the best vesture ; but the cotta should not be absurdly short ; the length used at Westminster Roman Catholic Cathedral is comely.

3. There is no reason why the choir seats should not be occupied by women and girls as well as by boys and men ; and often their voices are invaluable in a village. But do not dress them

up ; it is far better in a village church to reserve the use of cassocks and surplices for the altar servers, and of course for the parish clerk, where it is possible to revive this important office according to old English tradition.

### THE SERVICE

1. Advantage may well be taken of the 'Preparation' in the form given in the 1928 Prayer Book, used congregationally.

2. The service must not be allowed to become wearisome. Four hymns (or parts of hymns) are ample—after the Preparation, after the Epistle, at the Offertory, and after the Blessing. If there are (as there always should be) communicants, a verse or two of a hymn may be sung during Communion time ; it is well to have two or three hymns known by heart, and kept for use at this place, e.g. 'Thee we adore,' 'Lo ! the pilgrim's Food,' 'Bread of heaven.'

3. Even at a Sung Mass the Epistle and Gospel are best read in the speaking voice, though the solemn announcement of the Gospel and its respond may be sung. This counters the objection raised by old-fashioned folk that, if they lose Matins, they lose 'hearing the Bible read.'

4. If the Commandments are read, they should never be 'preached,' and the responses (kyries) are better said in a low tone than sung.

5. Use the Book of Common Prayer—what-

ever improvements you may think desirable in it. Country people like to 'follow the service' in their books. If for any reason using a special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, tell the congregation so before the service.

6. There is a good deal to be said, in many villages, for preaching the sermon at the conclusion of the Mass ; but notices, banns, etc., should always be published at the appointed place in the service.

7. Biddings should be made homely and real ; do not ask people to pray for something that they know nothing about.

8. Avoid long pauses for *Secreta* ; a pause after the Consecration is good, if the people are often reminded how to use it.

9. Confession, Absolution, and Comfortable Words should never be sung.

10. Say the latter part of the Prayer of Consecration, 'Who in the same night . . . , ' in a very low tone, but audibly and distinctly.

11. The ringing of a tower bell at the moment of the Consecration is more easily understood by the people than the ringing of a little bell at the altar ; it serves also as a reminder to people outside, and gives the verger a 'part in' the Consecration.

12. A little bell is useful at the moment of the priest's Communion ; it saves people from watching to see when to approach the altar—and they should be taught to 'go up' directly it rings, so

that there is a ' rail-full ' when the priest turns round.

13. Great stress should be laid on all joining in the 'Our Father,' which is therefore best said in the speaking voice. It is also most impressive to give the Blessing in the natural voice.

14. The *Gloria in Excelsis* may well be said, instead of sung, in Advent and Lent.

15. Choice of hymns : at the end, usually a rousing song of praise ; after the Epistle and at the Offertory, if possible a hymn bearing on the subject of the day ; on ordinary Sundays, a morning hymn may well be sung at the beginning of the service.

16. After the last hymn, the priest may kneel in the nave and lead the people in a short devotion, e.g. the *Anima Christi*, or the Prayer of S. Chrysostom, or the *Angelus* ; on special occasions (e.g. harvest) the General Thanksgiving may be said together at this point.

17. If the children are placed together in the church, in charge of an adult, they may stand from the beginning of the Comfortable Words to the end of the *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, the superintendent softly giving the word 'stand'—'kneel' ; this change of attitude will greatly help to avoid fidgeting.

18. In a village church, reverence must almost wholly depend on the tone set by the priest. There must be, on his part, stillness, quietness, deliberate diction (but not undue slowness), and

dignity. If a hitch occurs, either in the choir or among the servers, it is best ignored at the moment ; probably few or none of the congregation have noticed it, whereas many would be distracted by an effort to correct it in the course of the service.



## APPENDIX

### MUSIC FOR THE VILLAGE EUCHARIST

*By Elizabeth Lunniss.*

#### MASS

I SUPPOSE all who take a lively interest in the music of the Church are agreed that this service demands not only the best that art can give but also the most careful and reverent rendering. By the best I do not mean elaborate or difficult works, on the contrary much of the most appropriate music for the Mass is quite simple, very dignified, and well within the scope of an ordinary congregation.<sup>1</sup> I mean Plainsong.

Plainsong is essentially congregational ; it is unisonal in character, and though it is quite complete without accompaniment, I think, generally speaking, accompaniment, light and unobtrusive, is a help to untrained voices ; and surely here of all services the congregation should be expected

<sup>1</sup> In speaking of the ability of a congregation I refer of course to such as are willing to learn and will stay to or attend a congregational practice. Those who decline to do this cannot conscientiously claim any say in musical matters.

and encouraged to take an active part. It is, however, a good plan to have some parts of the service, such as the *Gloria* before the Gospel, and the *Sursum Corda*, unaccompanied.

To what better music can we sing the Creed than the ancient melody which has come down through the ages and is steeped in religious tradition? This can be found in *The Little Red Book*, Series I, published by the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society, together with two melodies for the *Kyrie*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, *Agnus Dei*, and *Gloria in Excelsis*. Then there is Merbecke (free rhythm, please) and the *Missa de Angelis*; the latter is very tuneful and often paves the way for a purer form of Plainsong.

All parts of the service for which the speaking voice is used, such as the confession and amens, should be quietly but clearly and audibly spoken. The pitch, especially of the hymns, should be kept low enough to enable every one to join in. This is an important factor in congregational singing, so many of the hymns taking the melody quite beyond the compass of untrained voices.

The music of the Communion hymn should be strictly Plainsong and in keeping with the music of the Mass. Should the Litany precede the Mass the ancient processional is to be recommended and may be found in the *Psalter* (Briggs and Frere). This might well be sung unaccompanied, the organ being first used for the Introit hymn.

## VERSICLES AND RESPONSES

Versicles and responses should follow the rhythm of natural speech, and should not be drawled or sung heavily. I would suggest that these should be unaccompanied, the choir and congregation taking up the responses very alertly, to avoid an unnecessary and undesirable gap.

## HYMNS

Hymn tunes can be divided into several kinds. There are the Plainsong melodies (set principally to the office hymns), chorales, traditional, and modern tunes ; and each of these various styles requires special treatment.

The beautiful Plainsong melodies should follow the rhythm of natural speech. It is customary to have these melodies given out by one or two cantors ; the melody of the first line should be played very softly, the cantors then sing the first line, choir and congregation joining in at the second line. Playing over on the pedals is to be discouraged as it tends to heavy singing, which is wrong. The accompaniment should be light and the tone flexible. A slight dropping of the voice as in good reading is effective, but there should be no dragging or *rallentando* at the end of phrases.

Chorales generally demand very dignified treatment and can therefore be supported by fairly

heavy organ work. An occasional verse unaccompanied or with descant is very beautiful.

The tempo of traditional and modern tunes should be governed by the context of the words, and the greatest care is needed to resist any tendency to dragging the *piano* passages. All these should be given out by firmly playing over the first two lines on the organ, the choir and people standing up at the first chord in readiness to start immediately. If a lead is given in this way, a long pedal or melody note—always inartistic—is unnecessary.

### PRACTICES AND BOOKS

Where congregational singing is desired, a congregational practice is the ideal, and perhaps, as a beginning and to create interest, this might take the form of a special practice for festivals. At first it is best to avoid adverse criticism as much as possible and direct attention to the desired goal. The work should be done on the principle of choir alone, choir and congregation together, congregation alone, and then when interest has been aroused descants and harmony might be introduced. It is a good plan to have these practices in a room with a piano, the final one only being conducted in church.

I append a list of books which will be found useful and which contains all the music referred to in the foregoing notes.

*English Hymnal* (Oxford University Press).

*Little Red Book*, Series I (Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society).

*Missa de Angelis* (Novello & Co.).

*Merbecke*, e.g. ed.: Royle Shore, Martin Shaw, J. H. Arnold.

E. L.

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To the above notes I would only add that, in my experience, the music of the Eucharist is often best introduced progressively in a village church, as follows :

1. A plain service with hymns ; a little later, the *Agnus Dei* may be learnt, to sing after the silence following the Prayer of Consecration.

2. 'Amen' after the Collects, 'The Lord be with you,' *Sursum Corda*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, *Agnus*, may be sung. It is most important that the celebrant, if he sings the preface, should not be accompanied.

3. The Creed may be learnt during Trinity-tide, and introduced at Christmas ; the *Gloria* may be learnt during the following Lent, and introduced at Easter.

Either stick to Plainsong or stick to modern music, for the Liturgy itself ; a village choir cannot do justice to both.

R. H. N.

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BX Nottage, Reginald Harry.  
5149 The village eucharist; practical  
C5 With a preface by Paul B. Bull. Lo  
N6 Mowbray; Milwaukee, Morehouse [1930  
vii, 57p. 17cm.

1. Lord's Supper--Anglican commun  
I. Title.

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